

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1812

SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO USMISSION NATO

USCINCEUR

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP, NL, MARR, MAS, MCAP, PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: DEFMIN VREDELING VISIT TO WASHINGTON AUGUST 22

REF: (A) THE HAGUE 3408 (B) THE HAGUE 3395

SUMMARY: THIS MESSAGE GIVES PRELIMINARY INDICATIONS OF WHAT DEFMIN VREDELING ISLIKELY TO RAISE DURING AUGUST 22 VISIT TO WASHINGTON (PARAS -1-3 BELOW) AND BACKGROUND ON SUBJECTS WE RECOMMENDED IN REF A BE RAISED BY DEFENSE SECRETARY SCHLESINGER AND DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE RUSH (PARAS 4-9 BELOW). AS VREDELING IS VACATIONING IN SOUTHERN FRANCE, CHARGE HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO DISCUSS VISIT PERSONALLY WITH VREDELING, BUT ACTING POLCOUNS AND DAO HAVE DISCUSSED SUBJECT AT LENGTHWITH MOST SENIOR MFA AND MOD OFFICIALS WORKING ON VISIT. VREDELING IS EXPECTED TO RETURN TO THE HAGUE ON AUG. 14 OR 15, AFTER WHICH TIME WE HOPE TO BE ABLE TO PROVDE MORE DEFINITIVE INDICATION OF VREDELING'S INTEREST. END SUMMARY.

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1. VREDELING'S INTERESTS. MOD AND MFA OFFICERS IN CHARGE

OF PREPARING VREDELING VISIT(RUSSEL AND VAN VLOTEN
RESPECTIVELY) TOLD US THAT THEY FORESAW NO PROBLEMS
REGARDING LISTS OF TOPICS WHICH NETHS EMBASSY IN
WASHINGTON REPORTED THAT SECRETARY SCHLESINGER HAS
PROPOSED FOR DISCUSSION, I.E.,

- (A) THE FUTURE OF THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE;
- (B) FOLLOW-UP TO SECRETARY SCHLESINGER'S
PROPOSALS ON FORCE IMPROVEMENTS MADE AT THE JUNE 7 DPC;
- (C) KISSINGER'S PROPOSAL FOR REVITALIZING THE
ATLANTIC ALLIANCE, INCLUDING THE PROPOSAL FOR AN
ATLANTIC CHARTER;
- (D) BURDEN-SHARING AND BALANCE OF PAYMENTS
PROBLEMS OF THE U.S.;
- (E) THE DUTCH PROPOSAL FOR A NATO STUDY ON
SPECIALIZATION AND RATIONALIZATION;
- (F) THE DUTCH DEFENSE BUDGET AND RELATED
MATTERS;
- (G) OTHER TOPICS.

SINCE NEITHER RUSSEL NOR VAN VLOTEN HAS SPOKEN TO
VREDELING ABOUT VISIT, THEY HAD NO FIRST-HAND INDICATIONS
AS TO SUBJECTS TO BE RAISED BY VREDELING EITHER IN
ADDITION TO OR IN CONTEXT OF ABOVE LIST. ALTHOUGH RUSSEL
OF MOD DECLINED EVEN TO SPECULATE ON SUBJECTS VREDELING
MIGHT INITIATE, VAN VLOTEN OF MFA TOLD US THAT IN
PREPARING MFA BACKGROUND AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR VISIT,
HE IS WORKING UNDER ASSUMPTION THAT VREDELING WILL WANT
TO REITERATE IMPORTANCE GON ATTACHES TO CONTINUED NETHS
MEMBERSHIP IN NATO AND WILLINGNESS OF NETHS TO BEAR
EQUITABLE SHARE OF COMMON DEFENSE BURDEN. IN ADDITION,
VAN VLOTEN THINKS VREDELING WILL WANT TO DISCUSS
SALT, GO OVER DUTCH REACTION TO LATEST US
PROPOSAL ON MBFR, AND EXPRESS CONFIDENCE IN US NUCLEAR
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GUARANTEE.

2. IN LATTER CONNECTION, VAN VLOTEN IS CERTAIN
THAT VREDELING WILL RAISE SUBJECT OF TACNUCS,
PARTICULARLY PRESS REPORTS THAT US PLANS DEPLOY NEW
GENERATION OF "MINI-NUCS" IN EUROPE. AS VREDELING
MUST RESPOND BY AUGUST 31 TO PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS
ON THIS SUBJECT (REF B), VAN VLOTEN SAID VREDELING

WOULD WANT TO GET CLEAR PICTURE FROM SECRETARY SCHLESINGER RE US INTENTIONS. VAN VLOTEN SAID THAT VREDELING WILL PROBABLY WANT TO BE REASSURED THAT "MINI-NUCS" WOULD ONLY BE DEPLOYED IN EUROPE AFTER CONSULTATIONS IN NATO AND THAT US DOES NOT WANT TO LOWER NUCLEAR THRESHOLD BY TREATING SUCH WEAPONS AS "SUPER CONVENTIONAL". VAN VLOTEN SPECULATED THAT VREDELING WILL ALSO WANT TO BE REASSURED THAT RECENT USG STATEMENTS ON ROLE OF TACNUCS IN NATO STRATEGY DO NOT INDICATE THAT US IS QUESTIONING "ESSENTIAL ROLE" CURRENTLY BEING PLAYED BY TACNUCS. VAN VLOTEN SAID BOTH DEFMIN VREDELING AND FONMIN VAN DER STOEL ARE CONVINCED OF NEED TO MAINTAIN ROLE OF TACNUCS AS LINK TO US STRATEGIC NUCLEAR GUARANTEE.

3. IN ADDITION TO ABOVE, DAO LEARNED FROM ADMIRAL ROEST, NETHS NAVY CHIEF OF STAFF, THAT VREDELING HAS BEEN FULLY BRIEFED ON SUBJECTS OF INTEREST TO US AND NETHS NAVIES (E.G. ORION, LAMPS HELICOPTER, AND PATROL FRIGATE). WE HAVE NO INDICATIONS, HOWEVER, THAT VREDELING PLANS TO INITIATE ANY DISCUSSION OF THESE MATTERS.

4. BURDEN-SHARING. VREDELING IS LIKELY TO BE SYMPATHETIC AND FORTHCOMING (AS HE WAS AT JUNE 7 DPC) REGARDING BASIC PRINCIPLE IN LATEST US PROPOSAL THAT EUROPEANS UNDERTAKE NEW BURDEN-SHARING INITIATIVE. BOTH VAN VLOTEN AND RUSSEL CAUTIONED, HOWEVER, THAT US SHOULD NOT EXPECT VREDELING TO HAVE FORMULATED VIEWS YET ON SPECIFIC BURDEN-SHARING PROJECTS SUCH AS EXAMPLES PROVIDED TO NAC AUGUST 1 BY AMB. RUMSFELD. VAN VLOTEN SAID THAT VREDELING WILL ALMOT CERTAINLY WANT TO AWAIT OUTCOME OF NATO STUDY BEFORE

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DETERMINING WHAT SPECIFIC ACTION GON IS PREPARED TO TAKE. IN LIGHT OF ABOVE, WE THINK THAT US PRESENTATION ON BURDEN-SHARING SHOULD RE-EMPHASIZE PRINCIPLE EMBODIED IN SECRETARY SCHLESINGER'S PROPOSAL AT JUNE 7 DPC AND BE AIMED AT ENCOURAGING NETHS TO PLAY A LEADING ROLE IN DEVELOPING OF SPECIFIC PROGRAM BY EUROPEAN ALLIES. WHILE BOTH SECRETARY SCHLESINGER AND DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE RUSH WILL PROBABLY WANT TO REFER TO SUGGESTIONS PRESENTED BY AMB. RUMSFELD, WE DO NOT THINK THAT VREDELING WILL WANT TO BE PINNED DOWN ON SPECIFICS YET.

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5. NATO SPECIALIZATION STUDY. ALTHOUGH VREDELING HAS STATED ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS THAT ANY CHANGE IN NETHS ROLES IN NATO DEFENSE SHOULD BE AS RESULT OF AGREEMENT REACHED IN NATO, WE FEEL THAT IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO EXPRESS EXPECTATION THAT DUTCH WILL NOT ACT UNILATERALLY, E.G., TO CHANGE ROLE OF NETHS AIR FORCE. WE THINK IT WOULD ALSO BE USEFUL IN THIS CONTEXT TO POINT OUT MILITARY IMPLICATIONS FOR BOTH NATO AND NETHS DEFENSE OF ANY SUCH UNILATERAL ACTION. IT MIGHT ALSO BE POINTED OUT THAT UNILATERAL GON DECISION NOT TO REPLACE HONEST JOHN WOULD REPRESENT UNILATERAL FORCE REDUCTION BY NETHS UNLESS COMPENSATED FOR BY INCREASED DUTCH CONTRIBUTION IN ANOTHER AREA. AN UNCOMPENSATED ACTION WOULD, OF COURSE, HAVE NEGATIVE IMPLICATIONS FOR BOTH MBFR NEGOTIATIONS AND NIXON ADMINISTRATION'S EFFORT TO HEAD OFF UNILATERAL CONGRESSIONAL CUTS IN US FORCE POSTURE IN EUROPE.

6. DUTCH FORCE MODERNIZATION. AS ADDRESSEES ARE AWARE, GON IS PUTTING OFF DECISIONS REGARDING ACQUISITION OF SEVERAL ITEMS OF MAJOR COMBAT EQUIPMENT (E.G. CONFIDENTIAL

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REPLACEMENTS FOR F-104G AND HONEST JOHN) UNTIL NATO STUDY ON SPECIALIZATION IS COMPLETED. IN THIS CONNECTION, WE RECOMMEND THAT SECRETARY SCHLESINGER EXPRESS HOPE THAT ONCE FUTURE ROLES OF NETHS ARMED FORCES HAVE BEEN DETERMINED IN CONSULTATION WITH ALLIES, GON ACT QUICKLY TO PROCURE NECESSARY EQUIPMENT TO CARRY OUT SUCH ROLES. WE ALSO RECOMMEND THAT SECRETARY SCHLESINGER TELL VREDELING THAT IF RESULT OF NATO REVIEW OF ROLES IS RECONFIRMATION OF CURRENT STRIKE/ATTACK ROLE OF NETHS AIR FORCE, NORTHROP'S COBRA WOULD IN US VIEW BE BEST AIRCRAFT FOR FULFILLMENT OF THAT ROLE.

7. EAST-WEST MILITARY BALANCE IN CENTRAL EUROPE. DESPITE ASSURANCES GIVEN BY USG SINCE JUNE 7 DPC, MOD AND MFA OFFICIALS (PRESUMABLY REFLECTING VIEWS HELD BY VREDELING AND VAN DER STOEL) CONTINUE TO BE APPREHENSIVE ABOUT IMPLICATIONS OF SECRETARY SCHLESINGER'S PRESENTATION AT DPC. VAN VLOTEN TOLD US THAT IN PRESENT POLITICAL CLIMATE IN NETHS (I.E. STRONG PRESSURES FROM RANK-AND-FILE IN THE THREE LEFTIST PARTIES IN THE GOVT FOR REDUCTIONS IN DEFENSE EXPENDITURES), "IT IS NOT GOOD TO BE TOO REASSURING ABOUT THE FORCE RELATIONSHIP IN CENTRAL EUROPE". WE THINK IT WOULD BE USEFUL IF SECRETARY SCHLESINGER COULD GIVE VREDELING MUCH THE SAME KIND OF CLARIFICATION THAT HAS APPARENTLY REASSURED FRG DEFMIN LEBER AND STRENGTHENED HIS HAND IN DEALING WITH ADVOCATES OF DEFENSE REDUCTIONS. VAN VLOTEN THOUGHT THAT VREDELING WOULD PARTICULARLY LIKE TO HEAR MORE ABOUT SOVIET FORCE IMPROVEMENTS IN CENTRAL EUROPE, AND BE INFORMED ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP, IF ANY, BETWEEN THE "PENTAGON STUDY" AND SECRETARY SCHLESINGER'S DPC PRESENATION.

8. US FORCES IN EUROPE. ALTHOUGH BOTH MFA AND MOD HAVE BEEN INFORMED ABOUT RECENT AND UP-COMING US CONGRESSIONAL ACTION, FIRST-HAND SITUATION REPORT WOULD BE DESIRABLE, PARTICULARLY ON PROSPECTS IN SENATE IN SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER. WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT VREDELING WILL REITERATE THAT NEW DUTCH GOVT SUPPORTS ADMINISTRATION EFFORTS TO OPPOSE UNILATERAL US TROOP REDUCTIONS IN EUROPE.

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9. AGREEMENT ON PREVENTION OF NUCLEAR WAR. WHILE US-SOVIET AGREEMENT DID NOT GENERATE SAME KIND OF CONCERN IN NETHS THAT IT DID IN FRG, WE RECOMMEND THAT ASSURANCES AND CLARIFICATION GIVEN TO LEBER BE REPEATED

TO VREDELING. VREDELING MAY EXPRESS FEELING THAT US-NATO CONSULTATIONS ON AGREEMENTS OF THIS KIND COULD BE IMPROVED.

10. DUTCH DEFENSE BUDGET. AS REPORTED IN PARA 3 REF A, WE HAVE BEEN TRYING TO OBTAIN INFORMATION REGARDING 1974 DUTCH DEFENSE BUDGET AS IT HAS BEEN AGREED UPON BY CABINET FOR PRESENTATION TO PARLIAMENT IN SEPTEMBER. AVAILABLE SOURCES HAVE SO FAR BEEN TIGHT-LIPPED ON SUBJECT, BUT PRESS HAS REPORTED THAT DEFENSE BUDGET WILL BE INCREASED IN 1974 BY 200 MILLION GULDERS FROM 5465 MILLION EXPECTED TO BE EXPENDED IN 1973. AS IN PAST, ANY WAGE INCREASES THAT MAY BE (AND ARE LIKELY TO BE) GRANTED IN 1974 TO MOD AS WELL AS OTHER GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL WOULD BE FINANCED SEPARATELY AND THUS WOULD NOT HAVE TO COME OUT OF ABOVE FIGURE. ALTHOUGH LATTER ARRANGEMENT DIMINISHES INFLATIONARY IMPACT ON DEFENSE EXPENDITURES, THE SMALL INCREASE REPORTED IN THE PRESS (IF ACCURATE) WOULD BE LESS THAN 4 PERCENT AS AGAINST A CURRENT ANNUAL RATE OF INFLATION OF 8 PLUS PERCENT. ALTHOUGH INTERNAL ECONOMIES AND NATO REATIONALIZATION MAY GENERATE SAVINGS THAT COULD SERVE TO COMPENSATE FOR INFLATIONARY IMPACT IN 1974 ON MATERIEL AND OPERATING COSTS OTHER THAN WAGES, WE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE ABILITY OF THE NETHS TO MAINTAIN ITS CURRENT DEFENSE EFFORT IN REAL TERMS IN 1974. SECRETARY SCHLESINGER MAY WISH TO DRAW ON ABOVE IN DISCUSSING FUTURE OF DUTCH DEFENSE EFFORT WITH VREDELING.

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